



the sustainabilist

articles stories poetry

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Dedicated to Siqi Li, Dana Point, CA

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Sustainability - A Community Approach

Community sustainability can be a mixture of one or more of the following disciplines that can guide land-based decision making:

1. Permaculture (Nature-based community planning)
2. New Mythology (Community in the Hero's Journey)
3. Transition Town (Localization)
4. Regenerative Agriculture (Conservation and rehabilitation-centered)
5. Circular Economy (Re-Use, Recycle...)

###

The Sebastopol, CA Environmental Council Story (fiction)

Sebastopol is a city in Sonoma County, in California with a recorded population of over 8000. Today, wine grapes are the predominant agriculture crop, and nearly all lands once used for orchards are now vineyards. The creation of The Barlow, a \$23.5 million mall on a floodplain at the edge of town, converted old agriculture warehouses into a trendy marketplace for fine dining, tasting rooms, and art, has made Sebastopol a popular Wine Country destination. Famous horticulturist Luther Burbank had gardens in this region. The city hosts an annual Apple Blossom Festival in April and is home to the Sebastopol Documentary Film Festival. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sebastopol,_California

Danny has friends in the City and the country. Since Earth Day 1973, he has been an active member of the Sebastopol Environmental Council (SEC), building a coalition with eco-justice and sustainability. The EC espouses something called "whole systems thinking," or factoring in all inputs and outputs of a system. Call it self-sufficiency. Inspired by the Transition movement, the SEC works on localization strategies, especially around food production and energy usage. The 37-member Council takes a conservation and rehabilitation first approach to food and farming systems, especially to grape growing. Challenging the monomyth of mythologist Joseph Campbell, Sebastopol is on a Community journey with stories that involve a community that goes on an adventure, is victorious in a decisive crisis, and comes out transformed. Sebastopol is building resilience to climate change and increasing biodiversity. The SEC teaches and practices **Regeneration** - using Nature to revitalize a person or a system and **Recovering** or creating a healthy community and/or ecosystem. The Council seeks traditional or "natural" approaches to agriculture.

###

Definitions

Permaculture (Nature) is an approach to land management and settlement design that adopts **arrangements observed in flourishing natural ecosystems**. It includes a set of design principles derived using **whole-systems thinking**. It applies these principles in fields such as regenerative agriculture, town planning, rewilding, and **community resilience**. The term was coined in 1978 by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren, who formulated the concept in opposition to modern industrialized methods, instead adopting a more **traditional or "natural" approach to agriculture**.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Permaculture>

New Mythology (Community in the Hero's Journey). Applying Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey to **Community journey**. The hero's journey, also known as the monomyth, is the common template of stories that involve **a community that goes on an adventure, is victorious in a decisive crisis, and is transformed**. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hero%27s_journey

Transition (Localization). The terms transition town, transition initiative and transition model refer to grassroots community projects that aim to increase **self-sufficiency**, to reduce the potential effects of peak oil, climate destruction, and economic instability through renewed **localization strategies, especially around food production and energy usage**. In 2006, the founding of Transition Town Totnes in the United Kingdom became an inspiration for other groups to form. The Transition Network charity was founded in early 2007, to support these projects. A number of the groups are officially registered with the Transition Network. Transition initiatives have been started in locations around the world, with many located in the United Kingdom and others in Europe, North America, and Australia. While the aims remain the same, **Transition initiatives' solutions are specific depending on the characteristics of the local area**. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transition_town

Regenerative agriculture is a **conservation and rehabilitation approach to food and farming systems**. It focuses on topsoil regeneration, **increasing biodiversity**, improving the water cycle, enhancing ecosystem services, supporting bio-sequestration, **increasing resilience to climate change**, and strengthening the health and vitality of farm soil.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regenerative_agriculture

Circular Economy. The six principles (R's) of the Circular Economy are defined as:

- **Retaining** - holding a vision for change
- **Rethinking** - being critical of the status quo
- **Regenerating** - using Nature to revitalize a person or a system
- **Reducing** - eliminating waste
- **Reusing** - putting manufactured resources back in the system rather than in the garbage
- **Recovering** - creating a healthy community and/or ecosystem

https://willipaulstudio.com/pdf/Circular_Economy_Press_Release.pdf

Read the article online here:

https://willipaulstudio.com/pdf/Sustainability_A_Community_Approach.pdf

Personal Resilience

"(Personal resilience) isn't just the absence of mental illness, but a state of well-being in which one can realize their potential and deal with life's challenges in a healthy way." Dr. Veronica Searles Quick, Montage Health

Some say that personal resilience is made up of seven integral components: Competence, confidence, connection, character, contribution, coping, and control. What resonates with you?

Personal resilience involves behaviors, thoughts, and actions that promote personal wellbeing and mental health. People can develop the ability to withstand, adapt to, and recover from stress and adversity - and maintain or return to a state of mental health wellbeing - by using effective coping strategies. It's also the ability to adapt to stressors while maintaining psychological well-being.

Here are some ways to develop personal resilience:

- Practice self-care: Take care of your needs and feelings. Do activities you enjoy, like hiking, photography, reading, watching movies, or writing in a journal. Also, get enough sleep, eat well, and exercise regularly.
- Practice stress management: Try yoga, meditation, guided imagery, deep breathing, or prayer.
- Take action: Figure out what you need to do, make a plan, and take action.
- Consider the situation in a broader context: Avoid blowing the event out of proportion.
- Maintain social connections: Stay connected to people and groups that are meaningful to you.
- Have a good support system: Maintain positive relationships and have confidence in your strengths and abilities.
- Enjoy Nature: plant identification, hiking, camping, and star gazing are good ways to get away and destress.

(Main Source: Google Generative AI)

The Commons in the Resilient Communities Project (RCP)

The Resilient Communities Project is launching a permanent commons for living sustainably on the land within a regenerative economic system.

The original meaning of the term 'commons' comes from the way communities managed land that was held 'in common' in medieval Europe. Along with this shared land a clear set of rules was developed by the community about how it was to be used. Over time, the term 'commons' has taken on several meanings. Most generally, it can be used to refer to a broad set of resources, natural and cultural, that are shared by many people.

Traditional examples of commons include forests, fisheries, or groundwater resources, but increasingly we see the term commons used for a broader set of domains, such as knowledge commons, digital commons, urban commons, health commons, cultural commons, etc. <https://iasc-commons.org/about-commons>

A Resilient Community Land Trust establishes a permanent commons at the RCP as a basis for living sustainably on the land within a regenerative economic system. Members of the initial core team will help develop a binding land-use charter that will define how the Commons is created and stewarded for regenerative purposes.

The idea of a shared commons permeates life at the RCP, both legally and in everyday living. The Land Trust drives the governance at the evolving site. The site is held in commons. Equity shares replace the mortgage. This could be a difficult shift for new residents. Some form cooperative enterprises together. The daily activities and way of life of the community not only greatly reduce or eliminate harmful impacts on the local and planetary environment, but also actively heal and regenerate the land and natural world. This is no small feat and requires serious study and ongoing experimentation.

For more information, contact Brad Smith at bsmith.interplay@gmail.com

Regeneration: Using Nature to Build Resilient Communities

The Resilient Communities Project (RCP) defines a Resilient Community as one that:

- Nurtures the healing and well-being of members and the wider community
- Rejuvenates ecosystems while building soil and benefiting the climate
- Provides simple, affordable, low impact housing
- Regeneratively produces much or most of its own food and other necessities

The six principles (R's) of the Circular Economy are defined as:

- Retaining - holding a vision for change
- Rethinking - being critical of the status quo
- Regenerating - using Nature to revitalize a person or a system
- Reducing - eliminating waste
- Reusing - putting manufactured resources back in the system rather than in the garbage
- Recovering - creating a healthy community and/or ecosystem

Regenerating is using Nature to revitalize a person or a system. Espousing “whole systems thinking,” or factoring in all inputs and outputs of a system. Call it self-sufficiency. Every species is capable of regeneration, from bacteria to humans. Recovering or creating a healthy community and/or ecosystem drives regeneration.

Examples of regeneration in a resilient community includes:

- Solar energy = renewing the Sun's energy
- Reducing Stream Pollution = restoring a pristine ecosystem
- Barter = alternative exchange tool
- Cobb Building = earthen materials for structures
- Gardens = healthy food for all
- Pasture Land = help create the commons
- Housing Coops = communal living
- People Care, Land Care, Fair Share = permaculture ethics
- Community Fund (Bank) = shared resource development
- Land Trust = shared ownership strategy

Community Sustainability and Artificial Intelligence: A Primer

Community Sustainability is a social goal for people to co-exist on Earth over a long time or meeting the needs of the present community without compromising the ability of future communities to meet their own needs. Sustainability usually has three dimensions (or pillars): environmental, economic, and social.

Artificial intelligence (AI), in its broadest sense, is intelligence exhibited by machines, particularly computer systems. It is a field of research in computer science that develops and studies methods and software that enable machines to perceive their environment and uses learning and intelligence to propose actions that maximize their chances of achieving defined goals. (AI) will transform business practices and industries and has the potential to address major societal problems, including sustainability.

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4. Regenerative Agriculture (Conservation and rehabilitation-centered)
5. The Circular Economy

Principles of the Circular Economy:

A circular economy is a model of production and consumption, which involves Retaining, Rethinking, Regenerating, Reducing, Reusing, Recovering and Resilience for existing materials and products for as long as possible.

Retaining - holding a vision for change

Rethinking - being critical of the status quo

Regenerating - using Nature to revitalize a person or a system

Reducing - eliminating waste

Reusing - putting manufactured resources back in the system rather than in the garbage

Recovering - creating a healthy community and/or ecosystem

Resilience - human-scale and alternative community-based economics

AI-supported community sustainability can be focused on natural resources, power supplies, and infrastructure as a way of measuring and reducing the carbon footprint algorithm. By using Rethinking and Recovering, these measurements get to the heart of ensuring that the AI program supports a healthy environment. For example, one could design an AI program with circular economy prompts that looks at how a community's sustainable vision changes over time. Or how AI models a natural phenomenon such as a pollution source and its ongoing impact on sustainability. Degradation of the natural environment and the climate crisis are exceedingly complex phenomena requiring the most advanced and innovative data-driven solutions by AI.

AI will do much more in the future for sustainability and the planet.

stories

Green Chamber and the Home Goods Co-Op

The ovate green chamber is roughly 18' x 12' x 6' in size. It rests horizontally. A "pod" is often what onlookers call it. Grass and flowers grow on the outside and a stitched netting with nylon poles holding its shape. The City Council just voted to move the object onto the town square, just south of the statue of the Town Mother, Cassandra Dolely. There is irony a foot in Commonchance, WA.

Some call the pod a "pill." A cure for a town bleeding for a new way to be. The green chamber showed-up just as tourism rates are falling and people are packing up and moving away. The Home Goods Co-Op (HGC) has a plan to use the green chamber as a "mythical town saver." Both to save on energy bills and to bring visitors back to 'Chance.

OK - it's a tourist attraction. An ecological oddity? A big green football to some high schoolers. Many hope the thing will be a resilience catalyst for the transition of the town to alternative energy sources. The Mayor has punted the pill down the line to the post-hippie sunshine folks at the local HGC. Their first task is to water the green chamber and trim back the dead flowers and weeds.

The Co-op's plan is to introduce tax incentives so that local property owners can install more rooftop gardens and solar panels. The artsy green chamber is now a subtle metaphor for green energy. After wrangling at City Hall, the "Green Chamber Energy Initiative" passes and the town is a Hero!

poetry

shinny metal calculations

in our orbit

the lake has no bottom

the endless skies

all rise for you

shimmering rivers

towering forests

shaking crops

deep red wine

car washes

shinny metal calculations

green memories

slippery mountain tops

in our orbit.

Wild Pink Roses

Fleshy folds, Luscious lips

Scented toes and tiny thorns

Petal smiles

Pink eyes open

Royal garden romances

The bees are home!

Tucking

I'm tucking you in

You have a book

The night light is shadowy

A kiss and I'm asleep

Dreaming next to you

I'm all the drama I need

I have myself to blame
you've seen me around
keeping my head down
hands in pockets
poems in cheek
trying to break-in
to re-write the script.

cold call for a soul mate

I never believed you were here
your mask your earth
in the driver's seat
going south
dialing for love
forever hoping
endlessly recycling you
in the soul mate myth

sincerity

More than honest

Holistic

Integration of thoughts

and actions

Integrity

Almost love.

carousel

from the soil of acquaintance

to the climbing wall of friendship

we have absorbed the steps

of infinite couth

into the red rose of attraction

the sea of tranquility

we sit on great stallions

of the whirlin' carousel